

# FORM E - BURIAL GROUND

Assessor's Number  
Number

USGS Quad

Area(s)

Form

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

6-0-112-0

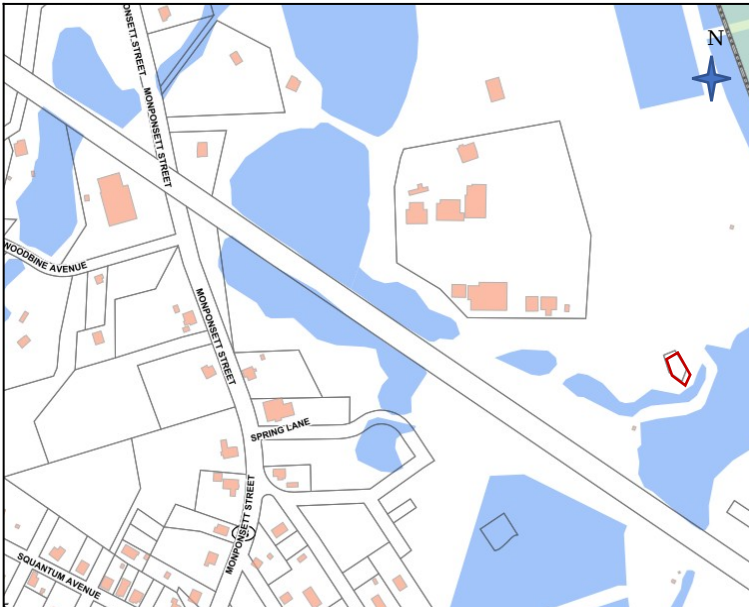
Hanover

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## Photograph



## Locus Map



**Town:** Hanson

**Place** (*neighborhood or village*):

**Address or Location:** 0 Monponsett Street

**Name:** Stetson Cemetery

**Ownership:** ☒ *Public* ☐ *Private*

**Approximate Number of Stones:** 16

**Earliest Death Date:** 1776

**Latest Death Date:** 1872

**Landscape Architect:** Not Applicable

**Condition:** Poor

**Acreage:** 69.19 Acres

**Setting:** Located far to the east of Monponsett Road on the Hanson/Pembroke line to the southeast of the Cranland Airport with cranberry bogs to the south and open field to the north.

**Recorded by:** Lara Kritzer, JM Goldson  
community preservation +  
planning

**Organization:** Hanson Historical  
Commission

**Date (month / year):** July 2018

# INVENTORY FORM E CONTINUATION SHEET

HANSON

0 MONPONSETT STREET

## MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.  
*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

### VISUAL/DESIGN ASSESSMENT

*Describe landscape features, gravestone materials, designs, motifs, and symbols that are either common Note any known carvers.*

Stetson Cemetery is the most isolated of Hanson's historic cemeteries, located far from the road near the Pembroke/Hanson town line. The cemetery sits close to the railroad tracks and is surrounded by cranberry bogs and water reservoirs to the south, open fields and the Cranland airport to the north and west, and forested land to the east. The largely rectangular site has been recently cleared and is free of trees and invasive vegetation. Wood posts with rope running between them enclose the site, which is accessible by a dirt road from Monponsett Street which had been an early road to Pembroke.

The entrance to the site is in the northwest corner of the property and is slightly higher than the road. A wood sign has been installed near the entrance which reads "Stetson Cemetery 1800." The site has suffered vandalism over many years and only two stones are still standing. A few intact stones can be seen lying on the ground, but the majority of the remaining stones are badly broken and in pieces. A few of the original bases are visible with the stones nearby. The majority of the stones are slate, including the still standing headstones, but a few marble stones are also in evidence. Both the standing and lying stones are badly worn and most are illegible. While a faint image of an angel is visible at the top of the earliest stone for John Stetson (1776) it is not possible to see details or gather additional information from the image.

More recently, two new granite grave markers were installed next to the original headstones to mark the graves of Revolutionary soldiers Abel Stetson and Zadok Reed. There is currently evidence of sixteen headstones on the site, but there may be more graves in the area which have since lost their markers. While the site itself is approximately five acres, all of the graves are believed to be located within the small area currently enclosed by the wood posts.

### HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Explain religious affiliations, major period of use, and evaluate historical association of this burial ground with the community.*

Stetson Cemetery is located on the former road to Pembroke near a saw mill which began operations in the late 1700s and is still shown on the 1856 Walling Map of Hanson. The Map locates the saw mill just to the south of the railroad tracks in the southeast corner of Hanson, and also shows the Stetson cemetery just to the north. By this time, though, the road to Pembroke was no longer in use and the cemetery sits alone in the far corner of town. The cemetery was established in 1777 after the deaths of John and Abel Stetson. John Stetson (1731-1776) was a lifelong resident of Pembroke and joined the Revolutionary Army on April 19, 1775.<sup>1</sup> His brother Abel Stetson also joined the Army and the two were killed in January of 1776 within days of one another and buried together in the new Stetson Cemetery. The following years another Revolutionary soldier, Jacob Chipman, was buried here after dying from smallpox. Two other soldiers, Zadok Reed and a second Abel Stetson, served as privates on the Continental Line, and survived the war to be buried here in 1822 and 1810 respectively.

<sup>1</sup> History of the Town of Hanson, Page 353.

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Area(s) Form No.

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

	HNS.80
	4

Four more Stetsons are known to be buried at this site including the first Abel's wife, Lydia, and the second Abel's wife Sarah and children Abel and Hannah. In addition, the site includes members of the Everson, Howland, Reed, Thrasher and White families. While the Stetsons do not appear in the area on the 1856 Walling Map and 1879 Walker Atlas view of Hanson, Joel White is shown on both maps as living on Monponsett Street adjacent to the railroad tracks. Joel, his wife Margaret, and son John are buried in the Stetson Cemetery, as is their daughter, Lucinda Howland.

According to *Old Cemeteries of Southeastern Massachusetts*, the cemetery holds eighteen graves. However, the USGenWeb Project site for Stetson Cemetery lists twenty graves. According to USGenWeb, the last burial here was for Sylvanus Everson in 1872. Everson is listed in the 1850 through 1870 Censuses as a farmer and farm laborer in South Hanson and is buried with his wife, Lydia, and daughter and son-in-law, Lucy and Israel Thrasher.

The Stetson Cemetery consistently appears on local maps of Hanson throughout the nineteenth century but is missing from the 1903 Richards Map of Hanson. By the twentieth century, its isolated location began to leave it open to damage. In 1959, the *History of the Town of Hanson* noted that the cemetery was already in poor condition with only a few standing stones. An image from that book shows three stones standing together on the site, none of which are still standing today.

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*Continuation sheet 2*

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220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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Stetson Cemetery (1876), USGenWeb Project. [www.usgenwebhansonma.wordpress.com/cemeteries/howland/](http://www.usgenwebhansonma.wordpress.com/cemeteries/howland/)

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4



Stetson Cemetery, 1959. Image from *History of the Town of Hanson*. Taken from [www.usgenwebhansonma.wordpress.com/cemeteries/stetson/](http://www.usgenwebhansonma.wordpress.com/cemeteries/stetson/)

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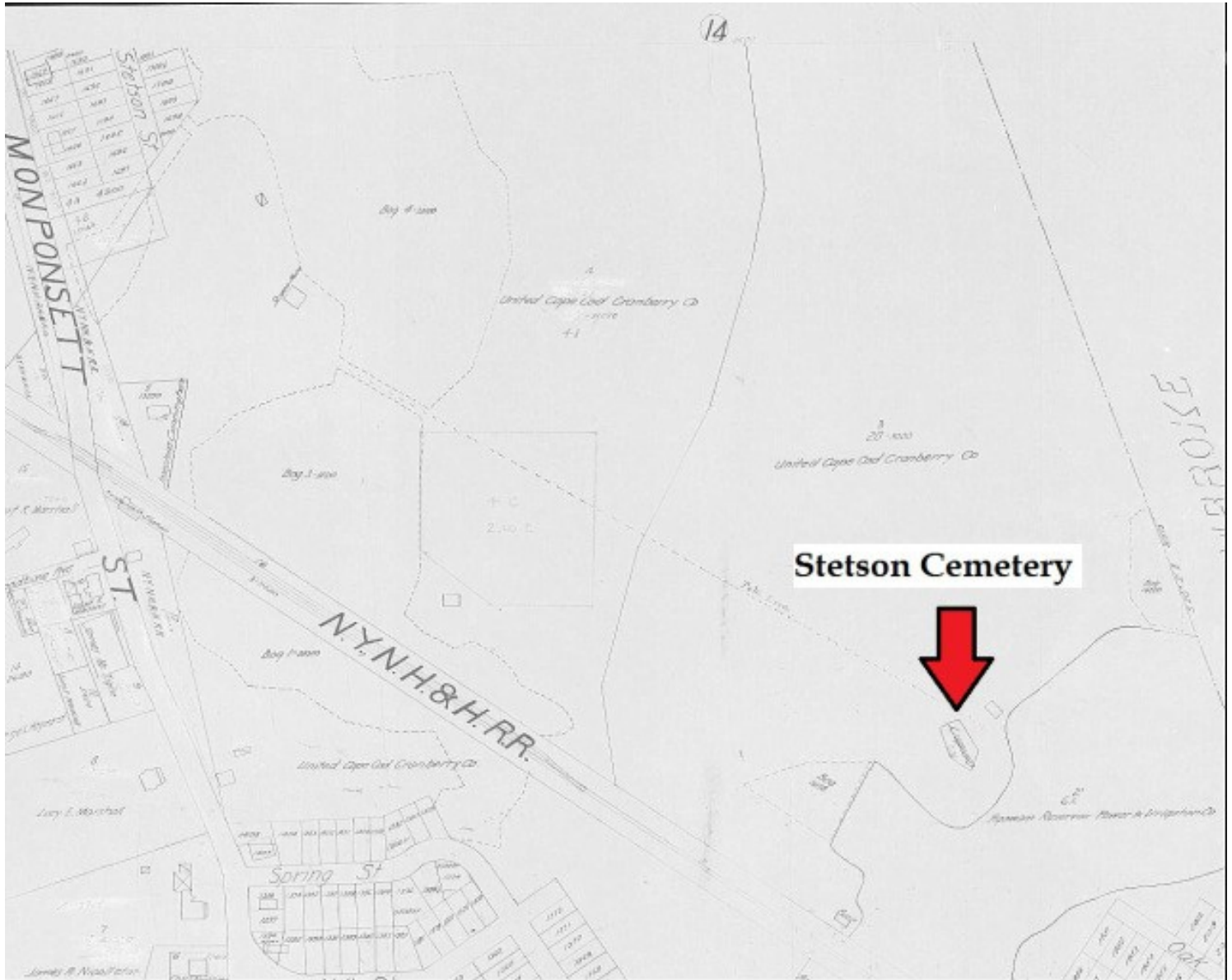
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Stetson Cemetery, 1929. Hanson Assessor's Map, Plan 6. Taken from [www.usgenwebhansonma.wordpress.com/cemeteries/stetson/](http://www.usgenwebhansonma.wordpress.com/cemeteries/stetson/)